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Info Minister slams PTI for spreading false propaganda Tarar accuses PTI's Murad Saeed of leading armed protesters, hiding in CM House Peshawar

Information Minister says there is a concerted effort to create a false narrative around the protests; Dares PTI to show video evidence of straight firing by LEAs on protesters; Govt followed IHC order to ensure law and order during PTI protest: Secretary Interior

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar on Sunday dared the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) to share the video evidence with the public which could prove that the Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) had opened straight firing on its protesters who descended on Islamabad a couple of days ago.

"I have shared the video evidence that show how a person from the protest told the protesters to open indiscriminate firing on the police. Now, I challenge the PTI to share one video of straight firing or live ammunition by the LEAs

against the protesters," said the minister while addressing a news conference.

The minister was flanked by Federal Secretary for Interior Khurram Ali Agha, IG Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi and Chief Commissioner Islamabad Ali Randhawa. Different videos were played during the press conference that shown how the PTI protesters used guns, shells and marbles against the LEAs.

Tarar categorically rejected the propaganda being peddled by the PTI on the social media regarding the direct firing on protesters, saying it was the PTI which brought professional

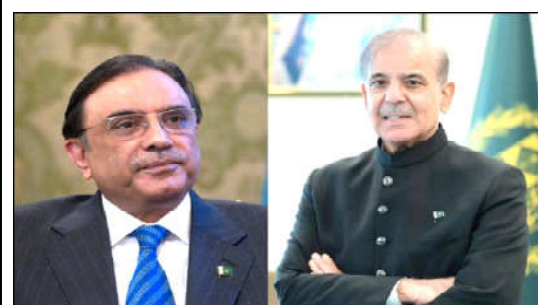
criminals and Afghan Nationals to the protest to ensure that there would be a bloodshed in the whole city. He said Murad Saeed, who was hiding in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister House, was also present in the protest and led an armed group that wielded guns, shells and glass marbles which were recovered from them later on their arrest from the frontline.

No personnel of the LEA is allowed for the live ammunition, he said, adding that the fake videos and pictures were being created to cover up their humiliation and political failure from the so called final call.



Mr. Attaullah Tarar Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and National Heritage, addressed a press conference in Islamabad.

President, PM reaffirm resolve to eliminate terrorism



ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday praised the security forces for their successful operations in Bannu and Khyber districts.

They commended their bravery for eliminating eight Khawarij terrorists and arresting eleven others injured in two separate operations.

The president and prime minister paid tributes to Shaheed Captain Muhammad Zohaibuddin and soldier Iftikhar Hussain, who were martyred during the operations, and acknowledged

the elevation of the martyrs' souls and patience for their families.

The prime minister prayed for the high ranks of the Shaheed personnel of the Pakistan Army and a grant of patience for the bereaved families.

The fight against terrorism would continue till the complete eradication of this menace from the country, the press release quoted the prime minister as saying.

The officers and personnel of the Pakistan Army were protecting the country from its enemies without caring for their lives, he added.

The prime minister said the entire nation, including him, was proud of the brave officers and soldiers of the Pakistan Army, adding the Pakistani nation could never forget the sacrifices of its martyrs.

He said the nefarious designs of terrorists and enemies of the country to spread chaos in Pakistan would never succeed.

Peace, love and brotherhood is identity of Sindh: CM

KARACHI (APP): Chief Minister Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah on Sunday said that the identity of Sindh was peace, love and brotherhood.

On the Sindh Culture Day, he said that the nations were defined by their culture.

He wished Day of Culture to the heirs of the great Sindh civilization living all over the world.

The Chief Minister said that the hospitality was an integral tradition of Sindh. He said, 'I am proud that I was born in Sindh, the land of Sufis.'

He said, 'I and my family had frequent opportunities to serve Sindh,

which I consider an honor.' Murad was of the view that celebrating the great civilization of Sindh was always a joy.

"We are determined to making Sindh a cradle of peace, and bring back the great era of Sindh civilization," he remarked.

He appealed to the youth to get modern education, make the book a friend and adopt skills.

He urged them to help each other and support the government in building a great Sindh.

He further said that today was a day of joy, and we must pledge to empower our mothers, sisters and daughters.



LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif attends funeral of Captain Muhammad Zohaib-ud-Din Shaheed.

Governor pledges to protect, promote cultural values of Sindh

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Governor Mohammed Kamran Khan Tessori on Sunday pledged to protect and promote the cultural values, traditions, and language of the province.

He said, 'I congratulate the people of the province.'

He said that on Sindh Culture Day, the people of the province wear Sindh caps and ajrak to express their love for their culture.

Bilawal lauds security forces for eliminating eight terrorists in operations

ISLAMABAD (INP): Chairman of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has lauded the security forces for eliminating eight terrorists in operations conducted in Bannu and Khyber districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

According to a press release issued by the Media Cell Bilawal House on Sunday, he said that the successful operation against terrorists was a source of pride for the nation.

Paying tribute to Cap-

tain Muhammad Zohaibuddin and Sepoy Iftikhar Hussain, who embraced martyrdom during the operation, he said, the terrorists responsible for the martyrdom of these brave souls of the nation will face a dreadful end.

Bilawal Bhutto offered prayers for the elevation of ranks of the martyred soldiers and expressed heartfelt condolences to their families, praying for their strength and patience in this time of grief.



Federal Minister For Maritime Affairs, Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh, talking to the Media persons during the Convocation ceremony at National University of Computer and Emerging Sciences, Chiniot - Faisalabad Campus.

Officer among 2 soldiers martyred, 8 terrorists killed in separate KP operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Security Forces killed eight Khawarij terrorists and others 9 injured while a captain and a soldier embraced martyrdom in two separate operations conducted in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa from November 29 to December 1.

"An intelligence based operation was conducted in general area Baka Khel, Bannu District on the reported presence of khawarij. During the conduct of the operation, own troops effectively engaged the khawarij location and resultantly killed five khawarij, while nine khawarij got injured," said an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release.

However, during the operation, Sepoy Iftikhar Hussain (Age: 29 years, resident of: District Jhang), having fought gallantly, embraced shahadat. "In another operation conducted in general area Shagai, Khyber District, three Khawarij were sent to hell, while two were apprehended by the security forces," it further said.

During an intense fire exchange, Captain Muhammad Zohaib Ud Din (Age: 25 years, resident of: District Lahore), who was leading his troops from the front, fought bravely, paid the ultimate sacrifice and embraced shahadat.



KARACHI: Under trainee Executive Engineers of WAPDA meeting with Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori.

Ministry of Interior shares details of protest fiasco orchestrated by PTI

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on November 21 directed the federal government to take all necessary measures to maintain law and order in the federal capital, says the handout issued by the Ministry of Interior on Sunday, sharing all the details of the protest fiasco orchestrated by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI).

The High Court directed the Interior Minister to engage with the PTI leadership in this regard, says the handout adding that given the sensitivity of the Belarusian President and Chinese high-level del-

egation visit, PTI was initially asked to postpone the protest but on their persistence to continue with the protest, PTI was subsequently offered Sngjhani area as a designated location. In this regard, out of the ordinary and at odd timings, meetings were also allowed between PTI leadership and its founder.

On the contrary and in spite of the extraordinary concessions extended, PTI violated the court's orders blatantly and instead of holding protest at designated place (Sanghani), unlawfully breached entry towards the Red Zone of Islamabad.



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister of Pakistan and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar is lighting traditional oil lamp at Sri Lanka stall during Pakistan Foreign Office Women's Association (PFOWA) charity bazaar 2024 at Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in the Federal Capital.

Shazia Marri highlights PPP's unparalleled sacrifices for democracy

HYDERABAD (APP): Central Information Secretary of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and former Federal Minister, Shazia Atta Marri, emphasized the unmatched sacrifices of PPP's leadership and workers for democracy, stating that such dedication has no parallel worldwide.

She expressed these views while talking to the media in Sanghar.

Shazia Marri described PPP as a party rooted in ideology, with its members steadfastly adhering to the vision and manifesto of Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto since the party's inception.

"Our workers have

sacrificed their lives for the country and the nation. We will never allow Pakistan to fall into the hands of terrorist organizations or individuals with extremist ideologies," she asserted.

Referring to Pakistan's democratic values, she said, "We are democrats people who respect all political entities, but we cannot tolerate any attempts to undermine the state by force".

She contrasted PPP's historical protests, highlighting the peaceful approach adopted even during the judicial execution of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, where PPP workers protested without damaging public property.

PM attends funeral prayer of Shaheed Capt. Zohaib-ud-Din

LAHORE (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday attended the funeral prayer of Captain Muhammad Zohaib-ud-Din Shaheed. The funeral prayer was attended by Corps Commander Lahore Lt. General Syed Aamer Raza, senior civil and military officials, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

The prime minister met with the family of shaheed captain and expressed his condolence. He paid tribute to shaheed Captain Muhammad Zohaib-ud-Din who had fought valiantly with Khawarij terrorists, adding that the entire nation was proud of his sacrifice and saluted him.

Dar to represent Pakistan at ECO meeting in Iran

ISLAMABAD (Online): Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar will leave for Iran tomorrow to attend 28th meeting of Council of Ministers of Economic Cooperation Organization.

In his address at the meeting, the Deputy Prime Minister will reiterate Pakistan's commitment to ECO charter and highlight potential of greater connectivity in region through development of rail and road networks, liberalization of visa regimes and simplification of border procedures.

Ishaq Dar will also reiterate Pakistan's concerns over hostilities in the Middle East, endangering the regional peace and security. He will sign the Charter for ECO Clean Energy Center.

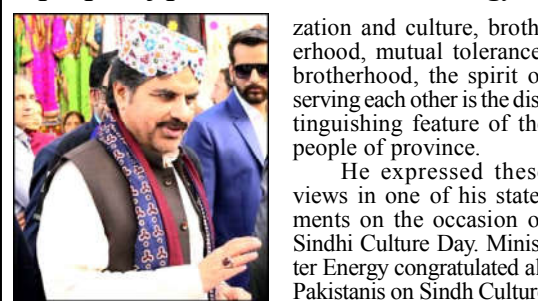
The Deputy Prime Minister will hold meetings with participating ministers and other dignitaries on the sidelines of the ministerial meeting.



KARACHI: A large number of people are wearing Sindh traditional dresses as they hold celebration demonstration on the occasion of Sindh Culture Day held at Karachi press club.

Sindh is the land of Sufis, which is of unique importance for its ancient civilization and culture: Nasir Shah

The spirit of brotherhood, mutual tolerance, fraternity, serving each other is the distinguishing feature of the people of province: Minister Energy



KARACHI: Provincial Minister of Energy and Planning Syed Nasir Hussain Shah said that Sindh the land of Sufis, is of unique importance in terms of its ancient civilization and culture, brotherhood, mutual tolerance, brotherhood, the spirit of serving each other is the distinguishing feature of the people of province.

He expressed these views in one of his statements on the occasion of Sindh Culture Day. Minister Energy congratulated all Pakistanis on Sindh Culture Day. He said that Culture Day is a day to preserve our traditions, Sindh, Topi Ajarak day symbolizes brotherhood, unity and peace. Nasir Shah said that Sindh is taking more steps to promote the culture of Sindh.



LARKANA: Political Secretary to PPP Chairman, MPA Jameel Ahmed Soomro addresses during the celebration rally on the occasion of Sindh Cultural Day, at Jinnah Bagh in Larkana.

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Flying ban reversal

The European Aviation Safety Agency has finally lifted the ban on flights of the national flag carrier to and from Europe after more than four years. Nevertheless, it will take months and potentially heavy investment in new planes before the airline can resume operations on lucrative European routes. The ban on PIA flights to the UK is yet to be revoked.

Still, celebrations are in order since the EU ban has been lifted after repeated failures of the Civil Aviation Authority since 2020 to address EASA's safety concerns. The European aviation watchdog has apparently "re-established sufficient confidence in the [CAA's] oversight capabilities". The decision to approve the resumption of commercial operations was based on the CAA's "significant efforts".

However, EASA clarified that the EU states would continue monitoring through the "prioritisation of ramp inspections of the air carriers certified in Pakistan and their crew to ensure compliance with aviation regulations and standards and identify safety concerns and trends before they become a threat".

Besides causing reputational damage, the ban, which came in the wake of a fatal PIA plane crash in Karachi, followed by a scandal over alleged fake pilot licences sparked by the claims of the then aviation minister, has cost the airline an annual revenue loss of nearly Rs40bn. It was also one of the several reasons for the government's failed attempt to privatise the national carrier a month ago when only one bidder showed up to buy the airline for a paltry Rs10bn for a 60pc stake in the company, against the asking price of Rs85bn. Undoubtedly, the resumption of flights to profitable European routes is being seen as a recovery point for the air carrier and may lead many to call for cancelling plans to sell it off and turn it around by investing in EU operations under a new management.

Similar efforts made by successive governments in the last one decade to resurrect PIA have amply exposed the futility of such exercises. There are many, including the incumbent privatisation minister, who have argued that the last attempt to sell the airline was structured in such a way as to scare away potential investors. Many influential leaders of the ruling PML-N are not in favour of disinvesting the airline. But only the naive can expect the reinstatement of European operations to help restore PIA's profitability. The reasons that have brought PIA to this pass are many, and deep-rooted. At best, the new development can only help the government fetch a better response from bidders when the airline is put up for auction again. It is, therefore, advisable that the authorities continue to focus on selling the company rather than investing public money in its fleet to resume its European operations.

Our own PTSD

Muna Khan

I am proposing a new ailment unique to Pakistanis: Perpetual-Traumatic Stress Disorder. I am not making light of our situation. On the contrary, I'm asking we recognise how this PTSD unites us, irrespective of income or political affiliation or even a lack of interest in politics. It requires recognition and then treatment, one of which is mobilising powerful nations to impose change on social media platforms and AI companies' incentives. They will not self-regulate. And I don't want any Pakistani government to regulate them because their solution to everything is to ban it.

In almost two decades, social media has gone from being the place we (re)connected with to becoming a source of major conflict in families and societies for disinformation. It is an uncontrollable beast that no one can tame.

But this column isn't about the dollar-proliferating disinformation industry per se; it is about its impact that, along with a curb on our liberties, is making us... umm... ill. We are in a perpetual state of traumatic disorder caused by the uncertainty of when the internet will return to normal, for example. And normal wasn't even that amazing to begin with.

This state of anxiety has reached a perpetual level because we do not get good governance or balanced, fair information from the government or media. Karachi may be a better city at the moment due to "low AQI no PTT" (thank you Teepu Sahab for this joke on X) but our stress levels begin when we step out into a crumbling infrastructure. Friends in Lahore say the smog is killing them. Islamabad is in some form of

lockdown every day. Fear rules KP and Balochistan every day. And this is without them turning on screens.

Who is responsible for this constant form of anxiety? Will banning the PTT cure us of these ailments?

There are plenty of studies to show how exposure to TV following mass traumatic events — violence, war, natural disasters, disease outbreaks — leads to post-traumatic stress disorder. They can result in health issues like depression, which can be a life-long issue, says the National Institute of Health. In the last decade, studies show anxiety is heightened among people who use social media more than those who don't. Social media is responsible for young peoples' mental health troubles. It is responsible for the increasing polarity in societies the world over.

The trouble is not the studies documenting what we all know. It is a failure to address these issues that causes this perpetual state. No one paid heed to the warning signs like a 2015 study in the UK by Dr Pam Ramsden which suggested that watching gruesome videos and images online at home could lead to the same types of symptoms most associated with combat veterans. Its publication caused a lot of controversy at a time before TikTok or 'fake news' was a phenomenon.

"How could someone who merely watches events on a screen suffer the same problems as, for instance, a combat veteran," asked the BBC. One expert replied "vicarious PTSD is a well-established phenomenon". The vulnerable are especially susceptible. Social media doesn't come with a warning, like traditional media, about harmful

content. In fact, it lures you in knowing the harmful consequences. Unesco said on Thursday that 62 per cent of social media influencers do not verify their content.

You see this play out on our streets every day like the controversy around the number of dead PTI protesters. No one is willing to believe anyone. Also notice how no one is even talking about the documented deaths in Kurram. Our PTSD is also selective.

The trouble is we are left to fend for ourselves in the absence of adequate services, from utility to health to information. We have limited access to resources to help us. A two-day wellness festival in Karachi offers lots of options to help you deal with a number of issues — if you can afford it. Imagine if this was offered as a national service.

For that, you'd need to have a government which prioritises the healthcare industry in the same manner it spends locking up dissidents.

Imagine living in a country where you feel cared for, secure knowing that a lockdown won't deprive you of access to essentials. Of equal import is knowing the information you receive is fair, accurate and responsible. People are turning to social media because traditional media has over the years eroded public trust. The last few months have shown us the violent consequences of disinformation campaigns. Maybe, they can be the wake-up call for journalists to unite and come up with strategies to win back public trust. I am hopeful people will return to news outlets because social media will trick them and fail them. Until then though, I fear we will remain in this perpetual state. — Courtesy Dawn

Water deficit

Naseer Memon

Rather than augmenting water productivity, our planners are obsessed with building new reservoirs and expanding irrigated areas. The reason? More structures mean more money. Barring the wet monsoon years, the Indus basin frequently endures water scarcity. For the last 25 years, the Indus River System Authority (Irsa) has declared water shortages every year and has not allocated water shares as enshrined in the 1991 Water Apportionment Accord.

Sindh has thus questioned the water availability certificate for the Cholistan irrigation scheme issued by Irsa early this year. In its summary to the Council of Common Interests, Sindh argued that Irsa's own water accounts (1999-2023) reveal that Punjab and Sindh have experienced annual water shortages of 13.7 per cent and 19.4pc respectively.

The water availability data presented by Punjab before Irsa was misleading. It left out the amount of water committed for some existing and future needs thus creating an impression of surplus water availability. It also failed to mention several current and future possible reductions. These reductions relate to the eastern river flows (2.98 MAF), India's use of the western rivers (2 MAF), the possible use by Afghanistan of the Kabul river (0.5 MAF), the overestimation of water supplies in the water accord (a shortfall of 21.5 MAF), Bhasha dam storage (6.4 MAF), Mohmand dam (0.88 MAF), Nai Gaj dam (0.16 MAF), Kurram Tangi dam (0.9 MAF), flood canals including the Kachhi, Ramee, Greater Thal, Jalalpur and the Pat Feeder extension (3.34 MAF), the Chashma

Right Bank canal (1.19 MAF), the minimum outflow to the sea (8.6 MAF) and the LBOD reclamation supplies (2.2 MAF).

Put together, these requirements mean 50.65 MAF water every year. This amount dwarfs the purported surplus flow by a wide margin. From 1999 to 2023, the average annual flow below Kotri Barrage remained 14 MAF. Altogether, there is a colossal annual deficit of 36.63 MAF water in the Indus basin.

Various reports indicate a bleak picture of future river flows due to the impact of climate change. The chairman of the National Disaster Management Authority recently shared worrying data at a moot. He revealed that the country's snow cover has decreased by 23.3pc in recent years.

He said that the glaciers are melting at an alarming rate of 3pc every year, resulting in the loss of 16pc of the glacial mass over the past five years. He warned that while the melting glaciers might result in temporary water surpluses, the long-term implications were dire.

The scheme also entails the construction of two barrages — the Bahawal Nagar and Hasilpur barrages on the Sutlej river. Additionally, the scheme involves the 195 kilometre-long Chiniot-Hasilpur link canal with a capacity of 15,000 cusecs and two feeder canals with a capacity of 8,500 and 5,500

cusecs. The Greater Cholistan scheme is designed to irrigate a command area of over 6m acres. If we add the 1.2m acres to be irrigated through the Smaller Cholistan scheme, the ambitious proposition would require even larger quantities of water.

Overall, the scope of corporate agriculture is not confined to Cholistan. In August, during a session of the National Assembly, the minister for food security, Rana Tanveer Hussain, revealed that under the Green Pakistan Initiative, 4.8m acres of barren land had been earmarked across the country for corporate farming.

Since corporate agriculture projects are being designed to produce grain for international trade, a reliable commodity supply is essential. This translates to the need for reliable water supplies to sustain corporate farming. According to a media report last month, Pakistan is seeking up to \$6 billion in investment from Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar and Bahrain over the next three to five years for corporate farming, with the aim of cultivating 1.5m acres of previously unfarmed land and mechanising the existing 50m acres of agricultural land across the country.

Cultivating such an enormous land mass would require a massive irrigation network. Such an extensive infrastructure and investment of several billion dollars cannot be left at the mercy of erratic flood flows. An uninterrupted water supply is possible only through perennial rivers and canals. Punjab's own share of water is already committed for existing canals. Therefore, it makes sense when Sindh, the lower riparian expresses concern at the development of new command areas.

Commerce News

Shaza Fatima pledges to revamp Internet infrastructure

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for IT and Telecoms Shaza Fatima Khawaja Sunday pledged to revamp the country's internet infrastructure, vowing to restore optimal internet speeds and bolster the telecom sector's infrastructure.

"My ministry is leaving no stone unturned to ensure seamless continuity in the industry. The recent surge in cyber attacks has put us on high alert and we are taking swift and decisive action to address these challenges and fortify our digital defenses," she said in an interview with a private news channel.

Shaza Fatima Khawaja also reaffirmed the government's commitment for protecting the IT and Telecom industry, citing it as a top priority. To achieve this goal, the government is upgrading

existing systems and focusing on key areas, including enhancing tower intensity, broadening broadband internet access and tackling pressing cybersecurity concerns to provide better coverage, boost economic growth and ensure a secure online environment for citizens, she added.

Responding to a query, the minister said that the Ministry of Interior will instruct the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) to probe and resolve issues faced by citizens when sending videos while ensuring overall 100% internet speed remains unaffected.

The minister revealed that in the event of any issues, the Interior Minister reaches out to the Pakistani Telecommunication Authority (PTA) for assistance. She

acknowledged that challenges exist, but assured that the government is diligently working to address them.

She emphasized that every citizen has the right to express their opinions and while digital platforms provide ample opportunities for self-expression, their temporary unavailability does not stifle citizens' freedom of speech.

Responding to another query, the minister stated that the government is currently upgrading its web management system, with a focus on enhancing cybersecurity measures to effectively counter and control cyber attacks and terrorist activities.

The minister also announced that the government plans to expand 4G and 5G internet services across Pakistan by April.

Agri. dept achieves surplus wheat sowing in Lodhran dist

LODHARAN (APP): The agriculture department has achieved a surplus wheat sowing target as wheat was sown over 398,000 acres of land against the set target of 396,000 acres for district Lodhran this year. Talking to APP here on Sunday, Deputy Director Agriculture Malik Zafar said that wheat sowing of 'Grow More Wheat' campaign remained successful. He said the teams of department were present in the field to guide and motivate farmers for maximum sowing to meet food security in the country.

He further informed that 16.5 million acres wheat sowing target was set for Punjab province during the current year. The agriculture official further informed that the provincial government,



ISLAMABAD: German Ambassador to Pakistan Alfred Grannas participate in Annual Christmas Market under the auspices of the German embassy in Islamabad at a local hotel in the Federal Capital.

Diversification vital for growth: Iftikhar Malik

LAHORE (APP): SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry former President Iftikhar Ali Malik has said that diversification of economic activities across various sectors including technology, renewable energy, agriculture, healthcare, and manufacturing can shield Pakistan from the uncertainties of global markets.

In a statement issued here on Sunday, he said as

Pakistan continues to navigate the complexities of the international economy, diversification can prove to be a pivotal strategy for sustainable growth and resilience. He said in today's interconnected world, economies are increasingly interdependent. "By investing in diverse sectors, we can mitigate risks associated with economic downturns in specific industries," he

added. He said more over, diversification fosters innovation and entrepreneurship. Encouraging a wide range of industries not only creates job opportunities but also nurtures a culture of creativity and adaptability, adding that innovation is a driving force behind economic progress, and diverse industries provide a fertile ground for new ideas and inventions.

'FDI in corporate farming vital for food security'

LAHORE (APP): Convener of the Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry's Regional Standing Committee on Food, Shahid Imran, emphasised the importance of foreign direct investment (FDI) in corporate farming as a means to counter food insecurity and meet the population's staple food needs.

Talking to a delegation of progressive farmers led by Chaudhry Shaheer Asif Arain from Sahiwal, here on Sunday, he underscored the critical need for FDI to bolster Pakistan's agriculture sector and foreign exchange reserves. "Pakistan requires substantial foreign

investment to bridge its current investment gap, improve agricultural and industrial production, create jobs, increase exports, and generate additional tax revenues," he stated.

He cited examples from countries like India and Indonesia, where public-private partnerships with foreign collaborators have enhanced local production of high-yielding seeds.

These partnerships circumvent the lengthy process of developing new cultivars while ensuring affordable access to high-yield seeds, ultimately boosting crop productivity and farm incomes.



ISLAMABAD: Vendors displaying seasonal fruits to attract the customers at Sunday Bazaar, Peshawar Morr.

WFP in partnership with govt ensures people have access to safe, health food: Ms Coco

ISLAMABAD (APP): World Food Program Country Director Ms Coco Ushiyama has said that the WFP in collaboration with the government and other partners is working to ensure that people have access to safe and healthy food.

"Access to nutritious and affordable food remains a critical issue in Pakistan, especially in rural and underserved areas and the World Food Program (WFP) is working to address these challenges, focusing on food accessibility and

affordability as part of its broader efforts to support the fundamental right to food," she told APP in an interview.

Elaborating on her organization's work, she said WFP's approach is rooted in partnerships and by joining forces with organizations like the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), WFP works on both policy and community levels.

This includes contributing to food security and nutrition

policy discussions and advocating for stronger social protection systems, she said, adding that at the community level, WFP collaborates with local governments to ensure that people have access to safe, nutritious food.

She said that one of WFP's key initiatives is the Benazir Nashonuma Program—a nationwide effort to prevent stunting.

She said this program combines health and nutrition services to support mothers and children, especially those under two years old, adding that through this

initiative, WFP is seeing promising results in tackling stunting and improving nutritional outcomes. WFP is also working on school meal programs and has recently launched a new initiative in Balochistan, she said, adding that this program provides schoolchildren with locally grown, nutritious meals, improving their health and supporting their education. These meals not only keep children in school but also enhance their ability to learn, contributing to long-term human capital development, she added.

WFP brings decades of experience in school meal programmes, implemented in over 100 countries. These initiatives are effective in increasing school attendance, retention, and learning outcomes. The impact goes beyond education, as better health and nutrition are directly linked to a child's ability to focus and succeed academically.

She said by integrating school meals with broader health and hygiene efforts, WFP ensures a comprehensive approach to child development.



ISLAMABAD: Vendors displaying dry fruit to attract the customers at Sunday Bazaar, Peshawar Morr.

Pakistani food exporters extend Malaysian visit amid positive response

LAHORE (APP): Encouraged by the enthusiastic response from Malaysian buyers, a delegation of Pakistani food exporters has extended their two-week visit by an additional week to capitalize on the growing interest and finalize trade agreements.

According to a message received on Sunday from Kuala

Lumpur, Saif Ur Rehman, the delegation leader, shared that the group has been successfully showcasing Pakistan's diverse and high-quality food products, particularly varieties of Nimko, which have garnered significant attention. "By the grace of Allah, Pakistani products meet international standards and are exceptional in taste," he remarked.

DPM Dar inaugurates Charity Bazaar at Foreign Office

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Sunday inaugurated the Charity Bazaar organized by the Pakistan Foreign Office Women's Association (PFOWA). Cultural stalls from various foreign embassies were displayed at the event held at the Foreign Office.

The Bazaar, aimed at supporting underprivileged communities, brought together diplomats and their families, showcasing the rich cultural heritage of different countries.

Speaking at the occasion, the deputy prime minister said that the bazaar provided a great opportunity to the people of Islamabad and Rawalpindi to visit the foreign office and have a glimpse of the rich culture of other countries, through their food and handicrafts, and help in charitable causes being per-

sued by PFOWA. "Today's bazaar is a captivating blend of diverse cultures and a variety of experiences, fostering harmony and fraternity among different nations," Ishaq Dar added.

He extended his gratitude to the diplomatic community and the residents in Islamabad for their 'active and colorful participation' in today's event.

"Wonderful to see that every country has done a great demonstration of the culture in their country, the food and different other articles which is a unique experience for the visitors."

He emphasized that one of the aims of this event was to promote a better understanding of the social, cultural, and economic life of Pakistan. Towards the end, he said PFOWA also arranges various events such as exhibitions, cultural shows, and social meetings.

OPC Punjab official meets PM in Lahore

LAHORE (APP): Vice Chairperson Overseas Pakistanis Commission (OPC) Punjab and Chief Coordinator of International Affairs, Barrister Amjad Malik, held a special meeting with Prime Minister of Pakistan Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in Lahore.

During the meeting, Barrister Malik congratulated the Prime Minister for his tireless efforts in restoring investor confidence and reviving the national economy. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif congratulated Barrister Amjad Malik on assuming the position of Vice Chairperson of OPC Punjab and emphasized that the federal and provincial governments would work together to resolve the issues faced by overseas Pakistanis.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif stated that overseas Pakistanis are very dear to him, and the

appointments in the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis, Overseas Pakistani Foundation, and the Overseas Commission serve as evidence of the government's commitment to addressing the problems of overseas Pakistanis. He also highlighted that with the retreat of disruptive groups, relief efforts for the public will gain further momentum.

Barrister Amjad Malik thanked Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and assured him that OPC Punjab and OPF would collaborate to resolve the issues of overseas Pakistanis. He also congratulated the government for stimulating the economy and boosting the stock exchange to new heights. Barrister Malik added that if trials had been conducted promptly for the perpetrators of the May 9 riots, the current situation would have been different.

Govt. should apply smart city concept in Sindh: Altaf Shakoor

KARACHI (INP): The government should apply the concept of smart cities in Sindh, as modern technology has made it possible to develop our major and secondary cities and towns swiftly, said Pasban Democratic Party (PDP) Chairman Altaf Shakoor here Sunday.

He said there are several benefits of smart cities. They have the potential to significantly improve the level of transport available across the city. They improve the ability to better manage traffic, track public transportation and better serve the citizens with consistent information and lower prices.

He said the smart cities ensure efficient public services: with limited amounts of natural resources left to meet people's needs, smart cities will have the technologies and necessary tools to reduce consumption of

those resources and reduce waste of water, electricity, etc without subtracting any factor.

Altaf Shakoor said in research show that smart cities, the energy-efficient buildings can improve air quality, use renewable energy sources, and reduce reliance on non-renewable energy sources.

He said people should have access to high-speed internet services at affordable prices and devices, with equal opportunities to access public Wi-Fi in local areas.

He said with the help of smart technology, cities can predict and analytically identify potential areas of infrastructure failure before it happens. These cities provide many business and employment opportunities, as people have equal access to basic resources such as transportation, internet connection, and job opportunities.

University of Mirpurkhas paves the way for growth with plans to enhance infrastructure and resources: Vice Chancellor

HYDERABAD (APP): The University of Mirpurkhas, established under the Sindh Assembly Act in 2023, has emerged as a beacon of hope for students in Mirpurkhas, Tharparkar and nearby underserved areas. The institution aims to provide accessible and quality higher education to local youth, marking a significant milestone in Sindh's educational development.

The Vice-Chancellor Professor Dr. Rafique Ahmed Memon, in an exclusive interview with APP, highlighted the university's key role in bridging the educational gap in the region. He expressed optimism about receiving support from the Sindh government, local philanthropists and the broader community to transform the university into a leading academic institution.

He said that since its establishment, the university has met all constitutional requirements, including the successful organization of its first pre-entry test for admissions on November 24, with assistance from the Sindh University Testing Center. Dr. Memon

expressed confidence that future entry tests would be conducted independently by the university.

Currently, the university offers ten programs, including BBA, Computer Science, IT, English Literature, Linguistics, Data Science, Education and others. With an initial enrollment of approximately 860 students, the university plans to expand its capacity gradually to meet increasing demand. Dr. Memon acknowledged several challenges facing the institution, including the urgent need for permanent infrastructure, an expanded budget and additional facilities. Despite these hurdles, the university continues to provide students with essential services such as accommodation, transportation and quality education. He added that efforts were underway to acquire land for the university near the Public School in Mirpurkhas, which could address infrastructure challenges. The vice-chancellor stated that the university's current budget of PKR 250 million would need to be increased to support its growing needs in near future.



KARACHI: A delegation of 09-members delegation led by Chairman Implementation Tribunal Newspaper Employees (ITNE) Shahid Mehmood Khokhar meeting with Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori

Political stability imperative for economic growth: Qaiser

FAISALABAD (APP): Political stability is imperative for economic growth and we must realize a difference between politics and violent protestation, said Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh.

Talking to media persons on Sunday, he said that no decision had been made in the federal cabinet regarding imposing ban on the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) or the imposition of governor's rule in KP. "Such measures have historically proven ineffective in foster-

ing political stability," he said and urged political leaders to opt for dialogue as a path to resolve conflicts.

He condemned violent protests as counterproductive for any political party and said that democracy had no room for violent politics. While acknowledging the right to protest, he stressed that demonstrations should not disrupt daily life. The minister highlighted the critical role of political stability in economic growth and said that without stability, Pakistan cannot achieve progress

comparable to its neighboring countries.

He urged all political stakeholders to take a step back to improve the political environment. He emphasized that turmoil often hampered national development whenever the country was on the brink of economic progress.

Reflecting on Pakistan's electoral history, Qaiser Sheikh pointed out that controversies had surrounded every election after 1970. He highlighted Chinio's central position in Punjab and its importance

as a business hub. He expressed concern over Pakistan lagging behind its neighbors despite being a regional economic corridor with vast opportunities for development. He stressed the need of unity among politicians, the judiciary, and institutions and said that political infighting was the root cause of economic decline. It is the time for all stakeholders to prioritize national interests and work towards mutual understanding which is imperative for national progress and prosperity, he added.

President, PM condole death of Syed Ali Hassan Gilani

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari on Sunday expressed deep grief and sorrow over the passing away of former MNA of Pakistan Peoples Party Makhdoom Syed Ali Hassan Gilani in a road accident. The president extended his condolences to the family members of the late Syed Ali Hassan Gilani.

In a press statement issued by the President House Media Wing, he prayed to Allah Almighty to rest the departed soul in eternal peace. He also prayed for the grant of courage to the bereaved family members to bear the loss with equanimity.

The president lauded the services of the late Ali Hassan Gilani to democracy and the Pakistan Peoples Party.

'PCB, BCCI agree on hybrid model for Champions Trophy and future ICC tournaments'

LAHORE (INP): The Pakistan Cricket Board and the Board of Control for Cricket in India have retracted from their earlier stance, agreeing to play their future matches in ICC tournaments on a hybrid model and easing the way for next year's Champions Trophy to be held.

The two boards held dialogue on Saturday after the International Cricket Council had convened a meeting on Friday and came to a consensus on a hybrid model for the Feb 19-March 9 Champions Trophy after the Indian government refused to allow its team to travel to Pakistan but the PCB has stressed that it will also like the same model to be applied for its team when tournaments are held on the other side of the border in the next three years.

The final approval to

PTA delays ban on unregistered VPNs after deadline passes

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan's telecom regulator has decided not to block unregistered Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) despite an earlier deadline expired on November 30.

The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) had asked businesses, freelancers and information technology (IT) companies to register their VPNs by the end of November to ensure compliance with government regulations.

While the original deadline ended on Saturday, officials say there will be an extension, though it remains unclear what the new deadline will be.

In recent years, Pakistan has implemented measures to control online content, including social media restrictions, drawing criticism from digital rights activists, who argue that such policies suppress free speech and hinder access to information.

Indian troops martyr 9 Kashmiris in November

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indian troops in their unabated acts of state terrorism in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), martyred nine Kashmiris, including a woman, in the month of November.

According to Kashmir Media Service, four of those killed were victims of fake encounters and custodial killings.

During the month, 12 Kashmiris sustained critical injuries, while 160 people, mostly Hurriyat activists, were arrested under draconian laws like the Public Safety Act (PSA) and the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), according to data released by the Research Section of KMS. These injuries and arrests occurred during 196 cordon-and-search operations and house raids conducted by Indian troops across the territory. The killings left three children orphaned, and Indian forces damaged two houses during the operations. Additionally, the BJP-led Indian government confiscated and attached 140 properties, including lands, houses, and shops, using draconian laws to suppress the Kashmiri people's political aspirations.

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Shafqat Shah felicitates people on Cultural Day

SUKKUR (APP): Prominent Politician Advocate Syed Shafqat Ali Shah on Sunday congratulated the people of Sindh province on the observance of Sindh Cultural Day and said that the Sindh culture was one of the fascinating colours of different civilisations and cultures of Pakistan.

He said the Sindh Cultural Day was being celebrated to mark the centuries-old beautiful culture and customs of Sindh province. He extended his heartfelt congratulations to the Sindh brothers and sisters on the day. "The land of Sufis, Sindh, has been the place of tolerance and peace for centuries", he added.

Sindh Cultural day celebrated in Larkana with great enthusiasm

LARKANA (APP): Sindh Culture Day was celebrated with enthusiasm in Larkana on Sunday.

In this regard, a cultural event was organized at Jinnah Bagh Chowk in the city with the joint cooperation of Larkana Press Club and representatives of Sindh media. It continued till late night, the famous artists of Sindh Shiraz Abbasi, Nawaz Siraj Solangi, Sajjan Mairi, Imam Bakhsh Baloch, Niaz Imrani, Nadir Lashari, Raja Samoo and others bowed their heads in the cultural event.

The ceremony was marked by four moons, on which the youth, old and children danced. In the main ceremony MPA Larkana Jameel Ahmed Soomro, Larkana Deputy Commissioner Dr Sharjeel Noor Channa,

Sindh Cultural Day observed across northern Sindh

SUKKUR (APP): The traditional Sindh Cultural Day was observed across northern Sindh on Sunday.

On this connection, rallies and functions were held in all towns of Sukkur.

Speaking at the event, Spokesperson to the Sindh Government and Mayor Sukkur Barrister Arslan Shaikh highlighted the importance of Ajrak and Topi. Speakers said, "Punjabi, Pashtun, Baloch and Urdu speaking are all our brothers and we don't discriminate against anyone".

Deputy Mayor Sukkur Dr Arshad Mughal said, "we are proud to represent our five thousand years of traditions".

On the occasion, people were dressed in traditional Ajrak and festive dresses to promote Sindh's culture.

HYDERABAD: Activists of Qaumi Awami Tehreek are holding protest demonstration against building new canals to draw additional water from the Indus River, anti-people policies decisions and amending the Irsa Act and demanding Save Indus River, at Hyderabad press club.

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Muqam announces compensation for Parachinar victims

PESHAWAR (APP): Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs, Gilgit-Baltistan, and SAFRON, and President of PML-N Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Engineer Amir Muqam has announced compensation for all victims of recent incidents of violence in Parachinar on behalf of the federal government.

He has directed the Kohat Commissioner to prepare a detailed report on the damages, said a press release issued on Sunday.

Speaking at a grand jirga in Kohat, the minister stressed the importance of restoring peace in Parachinar for the greater good of the country and its people. He expressed condolences on behalf of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and the federal government

over the tragic incidents, praying for the departed souls and the swift recovery of the injured.

Muqam emphasized that the issue transcends politics, urging all stakeholders to unite for a common resolution.

"This is not just a provincial issue; it concerns the entire nation," he said and highlighted his efforts to foster unity, including visits to the Chief Minister's House and collaboration with the Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The minister reiterated that lasting solutions can only be achieved through dialogue, not conflict. He promised to personally discuss the compensation package with the prime minister and present the matter to the federal cabinet.



MIRPUR KHAS: The University of Mirpurkhas, established under the Sindh Assembly Act in 2023, has emerged as a beacon of hope for students in Mirpurkhas.

Gandapur rejects Centre's claims of lawlessness, 'ineffective CTD' in KP

PESHAWAR (Agencies): After the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) government was blamed for misplacing the law-and-order priorities, Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur strongly rejected the Centre's claims of his administration's inability to cope with security challenges and empower Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) in the province.

"The law and order situation has improved in our government," said Gandapur addressing a press conference in Peshawar on Sunday in which he responded to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's statement pointing

towards the CTD's ineffectiveness to uproot terrorism in the province.

He added that the counterterrorism department was fully functional and carried out "thousands of successful operations" against terrorists.

He further detailed that the provincial government will disburse an additional Rs1 billion to the CTD. Special cells have been prepared for the department to keep the arrested suspects, he added.

The KP CM went on to say that his administration was also purchasing 20 bulletproof vehicles besides announcing to hand over funds to the CTD personnel for 300 kits and drones.

Memon for bringing reforms in Pakistan's agriculture sector

HYDERABAD (APP): The President of Hyderabad Chamber of Small Traders & Small Industry (HCSTSI), Muhammad Saleem Memon has stressed the need for bringing reforms in Pakistan's agriculture sector.

In a letter communicated to Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Chief Minister Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah, the HCSTSI President urged the formulation of a 25-year comprehensive agricultural policy.

This proposed policy aims to address the impacts of climate change and promote strategic crop planning to ensure sustainable

agricultural development.

In his statement Saleem Memon highlighted the significant role of agriculture in Pakistan's economy, contributing 20% to the GDP and providing livelihoods for 40% of the population. However, he pointed out that the sector faces numerous challenges and ignoring these issues could lead to further economic losses.

He identified water scarcity and climate change as the biggest threats to Pakistan's agriculture. This coupled with erratic rainfall patterns, declining soil fertility, and rising temperatures, has severely impacted agricultural productivity.



HYDERABAD: People participating in walk to create awareness on the occasion of World AIDS Day organized by Bridge Consultants Foundation outside Press club.

Seminar held to educate people about HIV AIDS in Nawabshah

NAWABSHAH (APP): District Administration, Health Department Shaheed Benazirabad and CDC HIV AIDS Center organized an awareness seminar on the occasion of World AIDS Day at the Darbar Hall of the DC Office.

Deputy Commissioner Shehryar Gul Memon participated in the seminar as the chief guest.

Addressing the seminar, Deputy Commissioner Shehryar Gul Memon, District Health Officer Dr Asadullah Dahi, MSPMC Hospital Dr Yar Ali Jamali, District Focal Person for AIDS Dr Riaz Shah, Incharge AIDS Treatment Center Dr Ghulam Qadir Rajput and others said that World AIDS Day is being

celebrated today with the aim of making the public aware of the precautionary measures to prevent AIDS.

He added that HIV/AIDS is a curable disease which can be prevented from causing further harm by getting regular treatment. They said that there are multiple reasons including repeated use of syringes, blood transfusion without screening, use of non sterilized machinery for operations and dental treatment, while this disease does not spread by shaking hands or sitting together.

Speakers said we have to play a joint role in creating awareness about the harms of HIV/AIDS. Speakers said that in order to cleanse the society from

this disease, awareness programs should be conducted in cities and especially in rural areas, to create awareness among the people.

They said that the Sindh government is working on an emergency basis to eradicate HIV/AIDS and other diseases and treat patients by providing better treatment facilities to patients suffering from this disease.

They quoted that saving the life of one human is saving the life of the entire humanity.

On this occasion, Deputy Commissioner Shehryar Gul Memon and others distributed certificates of appreciation and medals among the officers and employees who performed best.